

Town of Canton
November 18, 2021
Public Hearing 5:45 pm
Regular Board Meeting 6:00pm
Minutes
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Present

Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley, Council Members Bob Washo, James Smith, Dave Nelson, and Martha Foley Smith

Also in Attendance

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Karin Blackburn, Confidential Secretary/Bookkeeper Dylan Barringer, Assessor Cindy Brand, Code Enforcement Officer Michael McQuade, Historian Linda Casserly, Economic Development Director Leigh Rodriguez, Recreation Director Meghan Richardson, Highway Superintendent Calvin Rose, John Gray, CPA, Attorney Eric Gustafson

Members of the Public: Beverly Gauthier, Thomas Graser, Dan Huntley, Susan Huntley, Toby Irven, Karen McAuliffe, Paul Mitchell, Bob Santamoor, Heidi Smith, Steve Smith, James Snyder, Dan Soulia, Lyne Soulia, John Taillon

Public Hearing

- Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley opened the Public Hearing at 5:46 pm.
- Clerk Blackburn brought up the Public Hearing notice and read it out loud for meeting participants.
- Supervisor Ashley opened the Public Hearing to the public for public comment.
- Toby Irven, Canton, NY
 - First question: this is a television cable agreement. Is there an additional agreement for internet/web access and telephone services?
Mary Ann answered saying that additional agreements have not been received.
 - Second question: reducing the time limit from 10 years to 5 years?
Mary Ann has spoken to them twice and requested that it be reduced to 5 years. The Public Service Commission wanted Charter Communications to do a 15-year plan, but Charter Communications said no they will do a 10 year.
Toby responded by saying legally with regard to this agreement, how does one recognize that a Village or a Town can ask for increased services to its service area.
This agreement doesn't speak to that.
Eric Gustafson: this agreement doesn't cover the full range of services they can provide. If there is a question, we can ask them directly about the services within the

town.

- Toby, last question, the 5% franchise fee – is there any thought that this will be redistributed to the users, or is it going to the Town budget?

Mary Ann responded by saying it is going to the Town budget.

Toby asked if that was the intention for this current budget.

Mary Ann confirmed that it is for the 2022 budget.

- Motion to close the Public Hearing made by Mary Ann Ashley, 2nd by Martha Foley Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Regular Board Meeting

A. Call to Order

- Supervisor Mary Ann Ashley opened the Board meeting at 6:00 p.m.

B. Public Comment

None.

C. County Legislature Representative(s) Update(s)

None.

D. Approval of Minutes

Regular Board Meeting 10/14/21

Special Board Meeting-Budget 10/19/21

Special Board Meeting-Budget 10/27/21

Joint Town/Village Board Meeting 10/27/21

Motion to approve these minutes made by Bob Washo, 2nd by Dave Nelson. All in favor. Motion carried.

E. Supervisor Report

- John Gray read over the highlights of the October 2021 monthly report which was sent to the Town Council prior to the monthly meeting.
- Bob Washo: for public knowledge - for any of those non-interest-bearing escrow accounts, these are not funds available to the Town except for professional services in preparation of these solar projects.
- Mary Ann: commented on Special Fire every year the Town receives Foreign Fire from the State, and then redistributed to the Fire Departments.
- Jim Smith: Special Lighting – has the Town received all of the funding/reimbursements for the LED lighting? Mary Ann confirmed yes.

F. Town Clerk Report

- John Gray confirmed that his firm was asked to look at the three accounts in the Town Clerk's office: DECALS, Clerk Fees, and Property Taxes. No central depository. Developed a system where you can see the income coming in and the money going out. Tied back to the systems in the Town Clerk's office.
- John Gray read over the highlights of the January 1, 2020 – December 30, 2020, report which was sent to the Town Clerk prior to the monthly meeting. In 2020, numbers were not recorded consistently from month to month.
- John Gray read over the highlights of the January 1, 2021 – September 30, 2021, report which was sent to the Town Clerk prior to the monthly meeting.
- Karin thanked John and his team for their time and efforts on this project. There's a lot of data that needs to be entered into Quickbooks. For public knowledge, the Town Clerk is still doing the bank reconciliations, monitoring the money going in and out of the office, and writing the checks. This is just an added layer of security.
- Bob Washo wants to thank everyone. As someone who has been tasked with auditing the Town Clerk's office, he believes the Town is in much better shape now that there are reports putting everything in one place to review.

G. Correspondence

- Letter from John Taillon, received on November 15th. Letter of resignation from Town Zoning Board of Appeals. Mary Ann read this letter and thanked John for his service on the ZBA.

H. Audit Committee

- Approval of Expenditures
 - A Fund: \$47,077.17
 - B Fund: \$117,138.42
 - DA Fund: \$17,090.87
 - DB Fund: \$6,387.83
 - SF Fund: \$3,750.00
 - SL Fund: \$277.53
 - TA Fund: \$17,262.21

Jim Smith confirmed that \$117,000 is a lot for Town Outside B: \$95,000 obligation to the state retirement fund and \$20,000 payment to the Village for our share of Economic Development. Another big one next month for our share of Recreation.

Motion to approve these expenditures made by Martha Foley Smith, 2nd by Bob Washo.

All in favor. Motion carried.

I. Acceptance of Department Reports

- **Calvin Rose, Highway**

- The old pick up that Highway wanted to replace. Sold on-line at an on-line auction for \$4,075.

- **Michael McQuade, Code Enforcement**

- Started Monday. Most of Monday was getting associated with everyone and updating the system.
- Got hooked up with the Town internet.
- With the help of Karin, there is a new building permit application. This includes updated icons and information.

- **Karin Blackburn, Town Clerk**

- Everyone has my report. Closed out the School Tax Warrant. 91% of that has been collected and turned over to the County.

- **Cindy Brand, Assessor**

- Welcome Mike. It's been a pleasure.
- Working on manual valuation model – coming along well.
- Getting ready to send out the non-profit exemptions – being sent out next week.
- Bob Washo: are you building the model from scratch?
Cindy confirmed it is from scratch. You have to get the information from the sales and then put in the data. Try to come within a range. It looks really good.

- **Linda Casserly, Historian**

- Interesting month with planting those trees. Beautiful day.
- Loss of Gary Barcum. His family ran the Cascade for years. The Motel will stay, it will be hard for the Cascade. Talked with him about three weeks ago about the luncheon for all the teachers that knew Johnny Oliver. That's a big loss to the community.
- Mary Ann asked how Rachel is doing? She's in "D" right now. She comes in during the mornings.

- **Meghan Richardson, Recreation**

- High School Hockey started this week.
- Minor Hockey is working to get the snack bar open in the Pavillion.
- The perimeter fence at Taylor Park is almost complete. A huge thank you to volunteers. Thanks to Mark McKenna who organized all the people. Bob Washo for using his tractor and brush hog. The cement abutment for the community boat launch is complete.
- Mount Warrior Sled Hockey Team barbeque raised \$1,700. Approved for \$2,000 from the Canton Community Fund for the project.
- Recreation Advisory Committee, next meeting on 11/30.

- Last week was invited out to Rensselaer Falls Board meeting.
- Recent news: last night the Zamboni garage door wouldn't open. Ice was cancelled two nights in a row. Hopeful that they are operational tomorrow. Unfortunately, no manual chain was installed.
- Mary Ann asked if the snack bar was split between the ice skating and Minor Hockey, but Meghan confirmed it has been Minor Hockey.

Motion to accept Department Reports made by Bob Washo, 2nd by Jim Smith. All in favor.
Motion carried.

J. Committee Report

● **Bob Washo, Solar**

- Solar continues to be a very active issue for the Town. In the past couple of weeks, the committee attended a Pilot workshop through the County. Learned how the County and IDA are handling solar. Clarity on the pilot end of things. Stay tuned for more on that.
- Welcome Mike (Code). Committee will be meeting with Mike next week to bring him further up to speed.

● **Martha Foley Smith, Economic Development Committee**

- Forming a housing task force. Currently looking at how to address the gaps in housing in the Town. A lot of different information in the Town housing issues. The idea is to actually get some action. Another meeting in early or late December.
- Fingers crossed: waiting on answer from Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

● **Martha Foley Smith**

- Did some research and sure enough, the Town and Village must post minutes and Department Head reports within 24 hours in advance of Board meetings. Change for Department Head reports and for the Town and Village reports. Karin and Sally have created Google drives and 24 hours in advance items will be saved in there and shared out to the public. This folder will not allow navigation out to other Town/Village folders. By law, this has to be done. By law, minutes have to be posted within two weeks of each meeting. This will be in effect for the December meeting.
- Martha read the information from the Association of Towns about the providing of reports to the public.
- Mary Ann thanked the Committee for all their work on this. She asked all Department Heads to still get their reports in by noon on the Friday before the meeting.

● **Jim Smith, Negotiations Committee**

- Committee is meeting Monday, 11/22 at 8am. This will be the third meeting. Trying to settle the contract before the end of the year.

● **Jim Smith, Highway Committee**

- New equipment for purchase. Later on, during this meeting.
- **Mary Ann Ashley, Policy Committee**
 - The Policy Committee (she and Martha) met and reviewed the Equal Opportunity Policy and will be presenting a draft at the December meeting. This policy states that when there are open positions, the Town must advertise.

K. Old Business

- **2022 Town Budget**
 - Bob Washo would like to make a motion to change the proposed part-time Deputy Clerk to a full-time Deputy Clerk at the additional cost of \$43,565.96 to come from the A Fund balance. This would come with an additional \$1,000 for staff development. 2nd by Martha Foley Smith.
Bob Washo: at the last public hearing, the incoming clerk made it clear that a full-time deputy clerk was essential. He believes that this is a step in the right direction.
Mary Ann supports this. This is coming out of the appropriated fund balance.
Bob Washo makes a motion to adopt the budget with the change as stated, 2nd by Martha Foley Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.
- **Charter Communications Agreement**
 - Supervisor Ashley asked Karin to bring up the resolution to take action on the agreement.
 - Jim Smith asked if we should wait until December, Toby Irven asked some valid questions. He's not optimistic that it's going to change anything, but we should go back and ask the questions.
 - Bob Washo agrees with Jim. Cable isn't even referenced in this agreement. Good questions and we should have better answers.
 - Dave Nelson agrees with Jim Smith. We need to take every opportunity to let them know there are issues.
- **Pyrites Hydro Project Update**
 - Eric Gustafson gave a brief update on this: they've done the preliminary work and the application for renewal; the Town has engaged the Council with this project. This will be in place for the next 18 months or so.
 - Bob Washo added for the public is the dam was licensed in the 80s and is being relicensed now.
- **Speed Limit Reduction Request CR 27**
 - Supervisor Ashley asked Karin to bring up the letter from the NYS Department of Transportation. The request was denied. The letter was from Aaron Docteur, Regional Traffic Engineer.
 - Jim Smith wasn't surprised that the request was denied, he was surprised at how fast the turnaround time was. He has seen them stretch on for over a year.

- **Norton Cemetery**

- Supervisor Ashley stated that Kevin Hammond approached Mary Ann and she forwarded it to the Board and dropped off a potential application for funding. Christine Whitman also reached out to Mary Ann and she forwarded it to the Board, for upgrades to the cemetery.
- Bob Washo thinks the Town should find out where their responsibilities begin or end, and then find out where the Town can be helpful or not.
- Jim Smith would like to have the Highway Committee meet with the Highway Superintendent and take a look at what is being done currently and see if there are ways to expand on what is being done. This may require some volunteer help. Need to talk with Eric about it as well. Mary Ann will let Kevin and Christine know.

L. New Business

- **Sun First Equipment Formal Finance Proposal-Highway Front End Loader**

- Now that the budget has been passed and some opportunity in this year's budget, Mary Ann needs a formal vote for the Supervisor to sign this commitment. Bob Washo stated that the Highway Committee is in full favor of this and he makes a motion to support this, 2nd by Jim Smith. Mary Ann, for the record, this is a five-year commitment for lease to own, for a new 2022 Caterpillar 938M, annual cost of \$31,057.23. Total cost \$192,477. Trade in or selling the old one outright. Offered \$50,000, but Calvin believes it's worth more than that. It's 12 years old next year. All in favor. Motion carried.

- **Sale of Highway Roadside Mower to Town of Madrid and Purchase of Highway Roadside Mower**

- Current mower was bought in 2010. Mows 100 miles a road at least three times a year. Town of Madrid offered \$8,500.00 Paid \$14,400 for it. Had it for 11 years. Jim stated that the Town has done a great job of pushing back the roadsides. Motion for roadside mower to be sold to the Town of Madrid for \$8,500 made by Jim Smith, 2nd by Bob Washo. All in favor. Motion carried. New roadside mower \$19,840.56. Purchasing from Cazenovia Equipment. Jim Smith stated this is a Municipal price. Non-Municipal purchase: \$26,423.00 There's a balance in the equipment line item. Whatever the difference is, it will need to be moved from the Contingency line. This will be done by resolution in the December meeting. Motion to purchase the new highway roadside mower from Cazenovia Equipment for \$19,840.56 made by Bob Washo, 2nd by Jim Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.

- **Economic Development Consortium Agreements**

- For years there has been an Economic Development Consortium made up of community organizations that invest in our economic development department.

It's been a verbal agreement and now there needs to be a written agreement. In the past, the Town has been the principal recipient of the funds with partnership with the Village. Now the Village is the recipient of the funds. There are four agreements as a partner in the process, not as a recipient of the money: United Helpers at \$2,500, St. Lawrence Health System at \$15,000, St. Lawrence University at \$15,000, and SUNY Canton at \$10,000.

Motion to have the Supervisor sign these made by Martha Foley Smith, 2nd by Jim Smith.

Mary Ann Ashley added that there is a shared services agreement where the Town contributes \$20,000 to the Economic Development Department. 1.5 positions in that department.

All in favor. Motion carried.

- **Approval to Advertise for Anticipated 2022 Positions**

- In the budget there are going to be open positions: Highway (Heavy Equipment position); in the Town Clerk's Office (Deputy Clerk position); Justice Court (part-time additional Clerk). By policy we will need to advertise for these positions.

Supervisor Ashley opened it up for discussions by Board members.

Bob Washo believes it's a good idea so everyone can hit the ground running after January 1 and thinks we should talk with the Department Heads to see what is needed.

Mary Ann Ashley said that the ads exist for these positions, and that the publicity line item is over budgeted and this will add to the cost.

M. Public Comment

- Lyne Soulia, Canton

She appreciates Jim's comments on CR 27. Wonders if the State will forward their complete survey. Living on that stretch of the road, she knows how dangerous it can be.

Norton Cemetery: volunteers for Town owned cemeteries would be a great thing. Volunteers need recognition to keep going. How about a volunteer recognition day or a barbecue?

She wanted to thank the C/T Committee for making the minutes are out there in a timely manner and the Department Head reports before the meeting. She believes it's important to have them out there beforehand so community members can read them before the meeting and maybe ask questions. Be active at the local level.

- Heidi Smith, Canton

Thanked the Board for approving the full-time Deputy position and putting the training back into the budget.

- Toby Irven, Canton

As chairperson of the Complete Streets Task Force of the Village and Town, they were fully supportive of the CR 27 Speed Reduction, he would like to contact Mr. Docteur for the data that backs up their decision.

Secondarily, pursue any appeals process that is possible. If not, the Complete Streets Task Force is ready to contact that State agency.

The publishing of the data on the public accessible website – he supports all of the comments made by Lyne Soulia. He thanks Martha and the Committee as well.

Mary Ann asked the Clerk to meet with her to draft something to Don Chambers on the CR 27 issue

- Linda Casserly, Canton
Would like to thank the Board for filling that full-time Deputy Clerk position. This will be a joy for the community and the Board.

N. Executive Session

Upon majority vote upon a motion that identifies the subject to be considered, the Council will conduct an executive session to discuss any of the issues identified as proper by Public Officers Law 105 (1) (E) collective negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law 1, (F) matters pertaining to a particular person, and (H) the proposed acquisition of property.

1. Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:30 pm made by Mary Ann Ashley, 2nd by Dave Nelson. All in favor. Motion carried.
2. Motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:12 pm made by Bob Washo, 2nd by Martha Foley Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.
3. Motion to adjourn at 8:13 pm made by Dave Nelson, 2nd by Jim Smith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Karin
Blackburn
Town Clerk